

WINTER TIRE CAMPAIGN

BRIEFING PAPER

Prepared for the
October 2004 TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING

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PURPOSE:

Provide an update to the Commission on recent developments related to studded tires.

ACTION/OUTCOME:

Update the Commission on WSDOT's work on issues related to studded tires.

BACKGROUND:

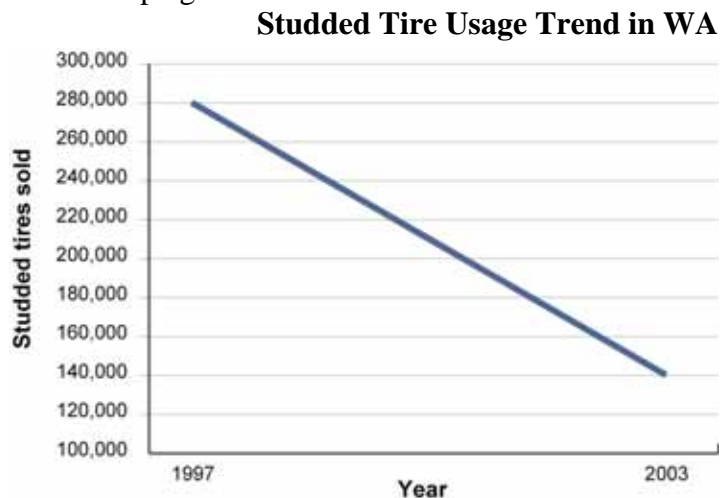
Though WSDOT has spent a significant amount of time and effort researching and reporting about the damage done to roadways because of studded tires, many consumers are reluctant to give up the tires. In 2003, WSDOT began working with the tire industry to develop a plan that would meet the needs of the department and the industry, as well as the motorists and taxpayers of Washington State. Through those efforts, we believe we have arrived at a solution.

DISCUSSION:

The department's concerns related to the use of studded tires have not changed, but the approach to dealing with the issue has. WSDOT is focusing on a continuing reduction of studded tire use through an educational campaign.

Information provided by the Northwest Tire Dealers Association revealed studded tire sales have been declining in Washington State.

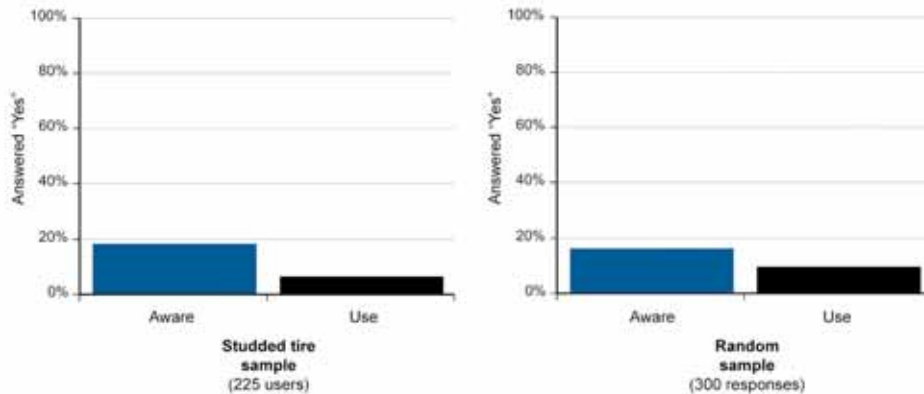
Source: Northwest Tire Dealers Assoc.



A study conducted by WSDOT also revealed that although many good winter tires are now available, a lack of public understanding exists in relation to the various winter tire options.

Are people aware of new alternative tire performance?

Question 12: Are you aware of any tires that perform better than studded tires?
Question 13: Do you use them?



In both sample groups, only about 16% of the people polled were aware of tires that performed better than studded tires. Less than 10% use them.

Source: Studded Tire Use and Attitude Study

It is WSDOT's intent to continue our educational outreach partnership with the tire industry. The partnership's communication plan focuses on new messaging:

Key message: You're in the Driver's Seat. Prepare for Winter.

Supporting messages:

- Winter driving is a challenge – conditions vary
- Array of tires is available – it's not one size fits all
- Go see your tire dealer
- Choose the best tire for the conditions you'll face

The communication strategies include:

- Press releases
- Radio spots
- Winter driving brochure
- Coordination of the You're in the Driver's Seat campaign
- Highway Advisory Radio messages
- Web pages

Further, WSDOT plans to monitor the results of the efforts of the outreach campaign by obtaining new data from the tire industry that indicates the current trend for studded tire sales.

WSDOT is in the process of collecting information that determines the extent of the damage studs do to highways. This is being done through the use of a scanning laser with results slated for 2005.

For general information contact Chris Christopher, State Maintenance Engineer, (360) 705-7851. For information specific to the damage done to roadways by studded tires, contact Tom Baker, State Materials Engineer, (360) 709-5401.